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**Wilcoxson School Newsletter- fall 2015/winter 2015**

**FLES Foreign Language at the Elementary School**

Elementary Spanish Grades 2-6

I have enjoyed my first half of the year at Wilcoxson School teaching, speaking Spanish, and learning with your son and/or daughter. I am thankful and privileged for the opportunity to work with every class and every student in their elementary language journey. Spanish lessons are targeted towards speaking proficiency while acquiring vocabulary used in everyday daily conversations. Students are encouraged to apply and practice their language throughout the complete lesson. They take an active role in their own learning and language through the use of self-assessment tools and rubrics. The assessment tools which are “elementary friendly” enable students to reflect on their own learning and set personal goals or next steps.

The Elementary Spanish Program is in its ninth year. Students have received a FLES Spanish songbook, and are learning and practicing new songs throughout the year. The following is a synopsis of the curriculum for the five grade levels.

**Culture** Grades two through five read about the history and modern day celebration of “El Día de la Raza” (Columbus Day), and “Las Posadas” (The Holidays) through the study of the history of the poinsettia in Latin America. In the spring, students will experience a “Cinco de mayo” (5th of May) celebration.

**2nd grade friends** learned a song about “Los meses” (the months), and completed a unit on months and weather. The second unit “Personas que ayudan” (Persons Who Help in the Community) they learned to express important community members. Presently they are studying “Los sentimientos” (Feelings), expressing how they feel and asking others the same. Upcoming units are “Los animales” (Animals), and a Literacy unit. Students will read and illustrate a literacy book, “Papá, Mamá y Ana”, the first in a series of five Literacy books that focus on vowel sounds and blending syllables, and will continue in third grade.

**3rd grade friends** learned a song about “Las estaciones y el tiempo” (the seasons and weather), completed a presentational writing assessment on the same, and are working on a literacy unit that emphasizes vowels and blending syllables. Upcoming units are three Literacy books (e, i, o, and u), “Los animales” (Animals), “La comida” (Food), and “La mariposa monarca” (The Monarch Butterfly) and butterfly lifecycle.

**4th grade friends** learned to talk about “Mi comunidad” (My Community) and completed a community map presentational writing assessment. We practiced our vocabulary with a “Community Wii”. Next, they learned to tell time and use time expressions to express time on the quarter hour, as well as time for different times of day. They are presently learning to talk about “Los pasatiempos” (Pastime Activities and Sports), and learned how to form the few conjunctions that exist in Spanish. Upcoming units are “Las preposiciones” (Prepositions), and articles and making nouns plural. Throughout the year students work continuously on literacy, building on their skills and fluency from grade 3, by reading “Cuentos fonéticos” a series of twenty plus stories. Students have reading logs and are encouraged to practice independently at home.

**5th grade friends** began the year working on a “Hispanos famosos” project in honor of Hispanic Heritage Month in September. Their projects were exhibited in a hallway gallery. Next they completed a “Mi cuidad” (My City) unit in their textbook “Spanish Is Fun”, learned what a “cognate” is and how they are useful in language learning for reading comprehension and speaking. They studied basic sentence structure and parts of a sentence in Spanish, and completed a review unit on definite and indefinite articles. Presently, they are working on completion of a unit about foods from Spain and Mexico, describing foods, and a restaurant dialogue to order meals. Upcoming units are “La playa” (The Beach) and “La planta” (The Plant) and the plant life cycle.

**6th grade friends** completed chapter one vocabulary and grammar in our text “Exprésate”. The year began with a project “Se habla español” (Do you speak Spanish?) for which students created a brochure depicting the three areas that benefit individuals when they learn a second language. They have mastered greeting friends and family vs. adults (tú vs. Ud.), greetings for all times of the day, providing and asking names, stating and asking where you and others are from. They have mastered personal pronouns, and how to conjugate frequently used verbs in Spanish. They have learned to express feelings, and to use the verbs “ser and estar” to greet, introduce and meet new friends. There is a strong emphasis on speaking for proficiency, working towards sustaining conversation, for the full 20-minute lesson, in the target language. Upcoming work includes “Comunicación por teléfono” (Talking on the Phone), and “Acerca de mi” (All About Me).

I am excited for the opportunity to work with the students at Wilcoxson School in the months ahead. I encourage you and your child to visit the “flesspanishstratford” Wikispaces for language practice at home. Please feel free to contact me by email with any questions you may have about our curriculum or program.

Sincerely,

Karen E. Murano

“Maestra”

